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EXECUTIVE COMMITEE OF THE
HIGH COMMISSIONER'S PROGRAMME
Thirty-seventh session

ACTION TAKEN ON DECISIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

(Submitted by the High Commissioner)

1. At its thirty-fourth session, the Executive Committee requested the High Commissioner to provide a report on "action taken on decisions by the Executive Committee" as a regular feature of future sessions (A/38/12/Add.1, para. 63). At its thirty-fifth session the Executive Committee additionally "requested that future reports cover all prior decisions of the Committee with respect to which action had not been completed, rather than just the decisions of the previous session" (A/39/12/Add.1, para. 53).

2. This report provides information on all decisions/conclusions made at the last, i.e. thirty-sixth session and on all those from previous sessions with respect to which action had not been completed. The information is consolidated by topic rather than following the chronological order of decisions. As most of the issues in question are covered in previous and current documents and reports, information is either given below or through cross-references to other documents, so as to avoid duplication. It should be noted that decisions requiring action by member States rather than by the High Commissioner are not reported upon.

3. The document and paragraph citations in the margin refer to the reports of the relevant sessions of the Executive Committee.

GE.86-02045/4278E

INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION

A/40/12/Add.1 para. 115.1 (h)

At its thirty-sixth session, the Executive Committee stressed the importance of the question of military and armed attacks on refugee camps and settlements being kept under constant review by the Executive Committee and requested the Chairman to continue consultations on this matter.

The action taken on this conclusion is described in document A/AC.680, paragraphs 34-46. The item in question is included in the agenda of the Sub-Committee of the Whole on International Protection.

A/40/12/Add.1 para. 115.1 (j)

At its thirty-sixth session, the Executive Committee noted with concern the growing phenomenon of refugees and asylum seekers who, having found protection in one country, move in an irregular manner to another country and expressed the hope that the problem this represents can be mitigated through the adoption of global solutions in a spirit of international co-operation and burden-sharing, and requested the High Commissioner to continue consultations with a view to reaching agreement on this matter.

The action taken on this conclusion is described in document A/AC.96/680, paragraphs 26-33.

REFUGEE WOMEN

A/40/12/Add.1 para. 115.4 (e)

At its thirty-sixth session, the Executive Committee stressed the need for such problems to receive the urgent attention of Governments and of UNHCR and for all appropriate measures to be taken to guarantee that refugee women and girls are protected from violence or threats to their physical safety or exposure to sexual abuse or harassment.

The action taken on this conclusion is described in document A/AC.96/680, paragraphs 47-58.

A/40/12/Add.1 para. 115.4 (i)

At its thirty-sixth session, the Executive Committee stressed the importance of a more detailed knowledge and understanding of the special needs and problems of refugee women in the international protection field and of gathering statistical, sociological and other data concerning refugee women and girls in order to identify and implement appropriate mechanisms to ensure their effective protection.

In view of the complex range of needs of refugee women, emphasis is given to the satisfaction of their needs through health services and public health education, supplementary feeding, vocational training, improved

living conditions, income-generating measures, education programmes as well as their active participation in community based activities.

With regard to the collection of statistical data, UNHCR used the services of consultants to collate information and improve the system at the level of education and the description of beneficiaries. Moreover, the special problems of refugee women in the international protection field are discussed in document A/AC.96/680 paragraphs 47-58.

A/40/12/Add.1 para. 115.4 (j)

At its thirty-sixth session, the Executive Committee requested the High Commissioner to report regularly to members of the Executive Committee on the needs of refugee women, and on existing and proposed programmes for their benefit.

Due to the constraints on documentation, it has not been possible to produce a report devoted entirely to this subject. However, a very careful analysis has been made by UNHCR of projects or project components in favour of refugee women, and special projects aimed at refugee women have been submitted to interested donors.

A/40/12/Add.1 para. 48 (q)

At its thirty-sixth session, the Executive Committee commended the High Commissioner for drawing attention to the special needs of refugee women in the field of protection and further urged him to take account of the totality of these needs, including self-sufficiency, within the assistance programmes, encouraged the efforts of the High Commissioner to strengthen the focal point for refugee women within UNHCR relating both to protection and assistance activities.

This matter is dealt with in the "Note on international protection" (A/AC.96/680) submitted to the Executive Committee. The focal point for refugee women was actively involved in the forward looking strategies and in the establishment of a working group on various aspects of the needs of refugee women.

THE PURSUIT OF SOLUTIONS

A/40/12/Add.1 para. 48 (f)

At its thirty-sixth session, the Executive Committee reaffirmed the importance of ensuring that due priority is accorded to the objectives of durable solutions and essential care and maintenance needs of refugees, and encouraged further improvements in cost-effective implementation of such assistance activities.

In order to encourage improvements in cost-effective implementation of such assistance activities, instructions were issued to all UNHCR field representatives and Headquarters staff responsible for the management of

programmes within their area of competence. These instructions focus mainly on specific programming issues that require follow-up action. Most of the issues are related, for example, to the formulation of appropriate standards and levels of assistance; assessment of the technical absorptive capacity to implement revised 1986 and proposed 1987 projects; better promotion of voluntary repatriation and; development of cost effective methods of implementing self-reliance programmes.

A/39/12/Add.1
para. 49 (h) (i)

At its thirty-fifth session, the Executive Committee urged the High Commissioner to continue and further strengthen his pursuit of durable solutions, notably voluntary repatriation as well as local settlement and resettlement in cases where voluntary repatriation is not feasible. At the same session, the Executive Committee also strongly emphasized the importance of self-sufficiency pending durable solutions, noted with appreciation the further increase in the percentage of programme resources devoted to the pursuit of durable solutions and stressed the need for continued efforts in this respect.

A/40/Add.1
para. 162 (a)

At its thirty-sixth session, the Executive Committee reaffirmed its support of the measures undertaken to give renewed impetus to the promotion of durable solutions through voluntary repatriation, local integration in new communities or resettlement in third countries and urged him to use the authority of his humanitarian mandate to pursue his efforts in this regard.

The importance of ensuring that priority is accorded to the objectives of durable solutions and essential care and maintenance needs of refugees is demonstrated by the fact that in the revised 1986 General Programmes requirements, the promotion of durable solutions accounts for over 30 per cent and the care and maintenance of refugees for some 56 per cent. In 1987, out of the projected total General Programmes requirements, 40.5 per cent is devoted to durable solutions compared with 54 per cent for care and maintenance.

A/31/12/Add.1
para. 119 B (e)

A/35/12/Add.1
para. 69 B

At its twenty-seventh session, the Executive Committee decided to request the High Commissioner to continue his programme of humanitarian assistance in the Tindouf region of Algeria and at the same time to undertake discussions with the Governments with a view to the speedy implementation of permanent solutions, including voluntary repatriation and durable settlement. The terms of this decision were recalled and reiterated in subsequent sessions of the Committee and in particular in a decision taken at its thirty-first session.

The High Commissioner notes the continuing absence of political developments which would provide the necessary climate to achieve durable solutions for the beneficiaries of the assistance programmes in the Tindouf region, Algeria. While resolution of the political obstacles is clearly beyond his power, he remains willing to contribute actively, within the limits of his mandate, towards such solutions whenever the general situation permits. He will endeavour to facilitate the initiative of settlement and voluntary repatriation in agreement with all parties concerned.

A/40/Add.1
para. 196 B (d)

At its thirty-sixth session, the Executive Committee requested UNHCR to consult with interested Governments in order to facilitate the admission and resettlement of individual refugees whose presence affects national security in the country of first asylum, or the safety or freedom of the refugee.

As in previous years, UNHCR has co-ordinated the resettlement efforts of Governments. Consultations were undertaken with these Governments by Headquarters as well as by representations in the field and resulted in the admission and resettlement of individual cases of refugees whose presence affected national security in the country of asylum or the safety and freedom of the refugee. The number of cases of this nature increased in southern Africa in the course of the first quarter of 1986. Unfortunately, very few countries are in a position to respond favourably to requests concerning emergency resettlement.

A/40/12/Add.1
para. 136 (d)

At its thirty-sixth session, the Executive Committee recognized the need for the High Commissioner to monitor developments in refugee settlements in low-income developing countries which have achieved self-sufficiency and, subject to availability of funds, to support measures aimed at covering the maintenance of infrastructure and other recurrent costs in such settlements.

A/40/12/Add.1
para. 136 (b)

At its thirty-sixth session, the Executive Committee urged him to continue seeking further opportunities to help refugees through developmental activities, in co-operation with the World Bank, UNDP and other organizations specialized in development assistance, as well as with non-government organizations with experience and expertise in this field.

The High Commissioner has continued to pursue most actively opportunities in this field, in co-operation with the World Bank, UNDP, the United Nations Department of Technical Co-operation for Development and other agencies. There has been encouraging progress in Pakistan and Sudan and initial contacts with the World Bank in

respect of activities in Somalia. Fuller details are given in document A/AC.96/677 (Part I) "Review of developments in UNHCR activities relating to assistance, durable solutions and refugee aid and development, and summary of decisions required".

A/40/12/Add.1 para. 115.5 (e)

At its thirty-sixth session, the Executive Committee indicated that from the outset of a refugee situation, the High Commissioner should at all times keep the possibility of voluntary repatriation for all or part of a group under active review and the High Commissioner, whenever he deems that the prevailing circumstances are appropriate, should actively pursue the promotion of this solution.

A/40/12/Add.1 para. 115.5 (i)

At its thirty-sixth session, the Executive Committee deemed that when, in the opinion of the High Commissioner, a serious problem exists in the promotion of voluntary repatriation of a particular refugee group, he may consider for that particular problem the establishment of an informal ad hoc consultative group which would be appointed by him with the Chairman and the other members of the Bureau of his Executive Committee. Such a group may, if necessary, include States which are not members of the Executive Committee and should in principle include the countries directly concerned.

A/40/12/Add.1 para. 115.5 (m)

At its thirty-sixth session, the Executive Committee agreed that consideration should be given to the elaboration of an instrument reflecting all existing principles and guidelines relating to voluntary repatriation for acceptance by the international community as a whole. The action taken on these conclusions is described in document A/AC.90/680, paragraphs 14, 23 and 24.

ICARA II

A/39/12/Add.1 para. 49 (k)

The Executive Committee, at its thirty-fifth session, called upon the Steering Committee and the High Commissioner to continue to play an active role in following up the results of the Conference.

In conformity with the request of the Executive Committee, at its thirty-fifth session, concerning its active role in following up the results of ICARA II, the UNHCR has continued to monitor the implementation of the Declaration and Programme of Action of the Conference. In the period under review, it thus followed up the implementation of the objectives set forth in paragraph 5 (b) of General Assembly resolution 37/198 of 18 December 1982, as described in the overview of developments in Africa, especially in paragraph 2.0.8, of document A/AC.96/677 (Part II).

Briefings were given individually and collectively to members of the Executive Committee, between November 1985 and June 1986, in particular during "Open House" sessions and at the informal meetings of the Executive Committee held in January and June 1986. Further, a special statement and discussion on the topic of "Principles of UNHCR assistance" are planned for the "Open House" session in September 1986, in which members of the Executive Committee will be able to discuss ways and means of ensuring a better understanding of the proposed programmes in relation to the objectives of UNHCR. The entire restructuring process as well as the services of an international consultancy firm are directed primarily towards conducting a functional study of the objectives, the working methods and procedures of UNHCR. It is hoped that the conclusions of this study will contribute substantially to enabling the members of the Executive Committee to form a better understanding of the proposed programmes in relation to the objectives of the UNHCR.

A/40/12/Add.1
para. 217 B (a)

At its thirty-sixth session, the Executive Committee requested the High Commissioner to persist in his efforts to increase the total number of women employed in UNHCR and to enhance their advancement prospects, including the highest level posts.

The High Commissioner has continued his efforts to increase the number of women in UNHCR, and the percentage of women in the Professional category has risen from 16 per cent in 1975, to 20 per cent in 1985 and to 22 per cent in 1986. Key positions are occupied by women in the new structure of UNHCR. Efforts will continue to be made to promote women to senior posts.

A/40/12/Add.1
para. 217 C (b)

At its thirty-sixth session, the Executive Committee requested the High Commissioner to continue to pay particular attention to the questions of devolution of authority, staffing policies and rotation of staff, adequate geographical balance at all levels, and training in various fields including management of emergency situations.

The question of the devolution of authority has also been considered by the Organization and Management Unit as well as by the consultants who are currently engaged in examining internal working relationships in UNHCR. The structural changes made at Headquarters are intended to enhance the role of the field offices.

The policy of rotation for Professional staff has been confirmed and, in addition to the existing bodies, an ad hoc committee was established early in 1986 to advise the High Commissioner on assignments to key posts at Headquarters and in the field. Geographical distribution

of staff in the Professional category and above continued to be a consideration at all times in staffing policy and 93 countries are represented on the staff. Priority was assigned to training and emergency preparedness training with the establishment in 1986 of a separate training budget, the setting up of a training unit in Personnel Services and the creation of training premises at Headquarters.

A/40/12/Add.1 para. 217 D (b)

At its thirty-sixth session, the Executive Committee reiterated its call for the implementation of the job classification recommendations once the recommendations relating to the regular budget posts have been approved by the General Assembly.

The recommendations concerning the job classification of Professional staff were implemented with effect from 1 January 1986 following approval by the General Assembly of the recommendations relating to the regular budget posts.

A/40/12/Add.1 para. 217 E (a)(ii)

At its thirty-sixth session, the Executive Committee requested the High Commissioner to report annually on the functioning of the Revolving Fund for Field Staff Housing and Basic Amenities through the Sub-Committee on Administrative Financial Matters.

The annual report on the use of the Revolving Fund for Field Staff Housing and Basic Amenities was submitted to the Sub-Committee on Administrative Financial Matters in document EC/SC.2/30.

ORGANIZATION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

A/40/12/Add.1 para. 219 (c)

At its thirty-sixth session, the Executive Committee requested the High Commissioner to issue the Rules of Procedure, duly amended, in all the official languages of the Committee.

The Rules of Procedure, duly amended, were issued in December 1985 in document A/AC.96/187/Rev.2.

A/40/12/Add.1 para. 227

At its thirty-sixth session, the Executive Committee decided to incorporate the reports of its two Sub-Committees in the final report of that and subsequent sessions.

The decision was implemented for the thirty-sixth session, as an exceptional measure. However, since it is contrary to General Assembly resolutions and decisions, the informal working group on documentation recommended that the Executive Committee should reconsider this decision at its thirty-seventh session (A/AC.96/681).